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THE CHICAGO FOREIGN LANGUAGE PRESS SURVEY

A General Description of its Contents

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I

Introductory

In the writing of American history, it has been recently recognized that not enough emphasis has been given to the many foreign-born groups who have helped to build this country. Although this neglect has been repaired to some extent in late years, the study of immigrant life in the United States remains largely an untilled field. The source materials on this subject have only been scratched. The failure to explore this phase of our national growth is also reflected in studies on urban development.

Almost from the date of its founding, the foreign-born element in Chicago has played a considerable part in the life of the city. As early as 1850 and for the next several decades, approximately one-half of the population of the city was made up of persons born in the old world. It is interesting to note that in 1850 the percentage of foreign-born persons in Chicago was greater than that of New York City.[1] At the present date although twenty-five percent of the population is foreign-born, if one were to add the native-born persons of foreign or mixed parentage, the figure would swell to sixty-five percent. In terms of numerical strength the foreign language communities of Chicago are virtually huge cities within a city. For example there are more than 400,000 persons in Chicago of

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[1] For a comparison see Bessie Louise Pierce, A History of Chicago, Vol. 1, p.418.

Polish descent; 375,000 of German descent; 300,000 of Jewish descent; 180,000 of Italian descent; 140,000 of Swedish descent; and 120,000 of Czech descent.

This statistical picture is not enough. That the foreign-born have left an indelible mark on the present character of Chicago, no one will gainsay. But the assimilative process is a delicate one and it is no simple matter to determine the specific contribution of a particular group. The individual or group to be assimilated not only receives but gives. There is reciprocal action. The ideas, beliefs, customs, and folklore of the newcomer are not over night forced out of existence but are slowly and inexorably fused with those found among the indigenous population. In the very act of shedding his former practices, the foreigner indiscernibly but surely transfers something which enriches and changes the native way of life. The assimilative process is further complicated by the fact that there is not only the interaction between a single alien group and the mass of native population, but the culture of one foreign group is at the same time blended with that of other immigrant groups as it emerges from the "melting pot." The final product namely, Chicago is, therefore, a fusion of combined foreign and native influences.

That the development of Chicago is to be attributed to many factors is only too well known to students of urban life. To assign the proper weight to one or all of

the elements involved requires much study and research on the one hand, and a keen objective analysis of the data collected on the other. There are at the present moment historians, sociologists, journalists and writers who are actively engaged in studying the social fabric of Chicago. It is clear to these persons that to understand why Chicago is what it is today and how it came to be so, they must, among other things, dig into the written records of the many foreign language groups of the city. Perhaps for this purpose the most important type of record is the foreign language newspaper. But to use these newspapers requires a knowledge of many tongues. No one person is sufficiently acquainted with the number of languages necessary to make a comprehensive study. Nor is it possible for one person during a single lifetime to complete such a search. It was to satisfy this need that the Chicago Foreign Language Press Survey was established.

II

History of the Survey

In the autumn of 1936 the Chicago Foreign Language Press Survey was organized as a work project under the then Works Progress Administration of Illinois. Its purpose was to translate and classify selected news articles appearing in the foreign language press of the city during the past century. The Survey was officially sponsored by the Chicago Public Library, with the complete backing of Carl B. Roden, Librarian, and Nathan R. Levin, Assistant Librarian.

Before the project had been in existence very long, it won the support of other agencies. The Newberry Library, the Chicago Historical Society, and the John Crerar Library extended it their facilities immediately. The history departments of the University of Chicago and Northwestern University endorsed the work, and through Professors Bessie L. Pierce, Isaac J. Cox, and Tracy E. Strevey gave valuable advice and direction. The name of Professor Pierce should be singled out particularly for her splendid assistance.

The work of the Survey was also received with a lively interest by the newspapers, organizations, and leaders of the foreign language communities of the city. Not a few of them acted as co-sponsors. In fact it is no exaggeration to state that the

success of the project is due in no small measure to this cooperation. Among the many newspapers and organizations that have participated, mention should be made of the following: The Abendpost, the Danish National Committee, the Danish Times, the Denni Hlasatel, the Dziennik Chicagoski, the Greek Press, the Greek Star, the Jewish Daily Courier, the Jewish Daily Forward, the Jewish People's Institute, the Národ, the Naujienos, the Polish National Alliance, the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America, the Rassviet the Skandinaven, the Svornost, the Saloniki, and the Zgoda.

Because of a curtailment in the program of the Work Projects Administration, the Survey was terminated in October 1941. Although it was not possible to examine all of the newspapers originally planned, the bulk of the work was completed.

The project was supervised at various periods by James Monaghan, Dr. Thomas R. Hall Jane L. Cates, and George Anagnos. The colossal job of arranging the material for microfilming was performed under the direction of George Anagnos and Oscar W. Junek.

III

Description of the Files

Although the files of the Survey were prepared originally on 5"x 8" sheets of paper, they have been reproduced on microfilm and are now available in that form to the reader at the Chicago Public Library, 78 E. Washington Street. The material was microfilmed because the library was desirous of preserving it for succeeding generations. The files consist of some 120,000 sheets of typewritten matter translated from newspapers of twenty-two different foreign language communities of Chicago. Represented in the Survey are the following groups:

Albanian	(91)
Bohemian	(15,811)
Chinese	(398)
Croatian	(1,321)
Danish	(3,847)
Dutch	(795)
Filipino	(558)
German	(18,448)
Greek	(10,706)
Hungarian	(2,688)
Italian	(2,950)
Jewish	(16,298)
Lithuanian	(5,950)
Norwegian	(7,654)
Polish	(16,368)
Russian	(5,963)
Serbian	(124)
Slovak	(509)
Slovene	(197)

Spanish	(1,909)
Swedish	(6,780)
Ukrainian	(997)

The figure appearing in parenthesis indicates the number of sheets in the files pertaining to the respective group.

For the benefit of research students the names and dates of coverage of the principal newspapers and periodicals included in the Survey are listed below:

ALBANIAN

Albanian Journal (Monthly) 1922-23.

BOHEMIAN

Czechoslovak Review (Monthly) 1918-24.
Denni Hlasatel (Daily) 1901-18, 1920-22
Svornost (Daily) Apr 1878-Sep 1885, 1890-92, 1896-1900.

CHINESE

Chinese Centralist Daily News 1928.
San Min Morning Paper 1936-38.

CROATIAN

Hrvatska Zastava (Daily) 1915-17.
Hrvatski Glasnik (Weekly) 1923,1928,1930
Jugoslavia (Weekly) 1921-23.
Jugoslovenska Zastava (Weekly) 1918.
Novi Svijet (Weekly) 1924-34,1936
Radnička Straža (Weekly) 1907-17.
Radnik (Weekly) 1923-Sep 1929.
Svjetlo (Monthly) 1911.
Znanje (Weekly) 1918-Feb 1922, 1935-36.

DANISH

Dansk Tidende (Weekly) May-June 1919, 1921, 1932-36.
Dansk Tidende Og Revyen (Weekly) 1922-Nov 1931.
Hejmdal (Weekly) Oct 1874-Jan 1878.
Revyen (Weekly) Apr 1895-June 1921.

DUTCH

Onze Toekomst (Weekly) 1906-13, 1919-27.

GERMAN

Abendpost (Daily) 1889-Sep 1911, Aug. 1914-Feb 1915, Jul 1918-19, 1923-35.
Chicagoer Arbeiter Zeitung(Daily)1879-89.
Illinois Staats-Zeitung (Daily) 1861-81, 1885-93, 1899-1901, 1914-18.

GREEK

American Hellenic World (Monthly) Aug 1926-Oct 1928.
Chicago Greek Daily 1921-32, 1934-Jan 1935.
Democrat (Monthly) 1927-Apr 1931.
Greek American News (Weekly) 1936.
Greek News (Weekly) 1935.
Greek Press (Weekly) June 1929-Mar 1934.
Greek Star (Weekly) Jan 1908-Apr 1910.
Loxias (Weekly) June 1908-Nov 1918.
Proodos (Irregular) Apr 1931-Oct 1934.
Saloniki (Weekly) Aug 1913-1931.
Saloniki-Greek Press (Weekly) Mar 1934-36.
Star (Weekly) Jan 1904-Jan 1908.

HUNGARIAN

Interest (Weekly) Nov 1933, 1934-36

HUNGARIAN (Cont'd)

Magyar Tribune (Weekly) Mar 1917-21, July 1924-31, Jan-Sep 1933.

Otthon (Weekly) 1922-36.

ITALIAN

Bollettino Della Camera Di Commercio Italiana (Irregular) 1911-Oct 1926, Apr 1928-1933, 1935-36.

Bollettino Italo-American National Union (Monthly) Mar 1924-36.

Il Bollettino Sociale (Monthly) Nov. 1928-Mar 1931.

Bulletin of Illinois Grand Lodge Order of Sons of Italy in America (Monthly) 1927, 1930, 1932-36.

L'Italia (Daily) Oct 1886-1920.

Mens Italica (Monthly) 1928-29, 1936.

La Parola del Popolo (Monthly) Sep 1921-Nov 1924

La Parola dei Socialisti (Weekly) 1908-May 1916.

La Parola Proletaria (Weekly) 1916.

La Tribuna Italiana Transatlantica (Weekly) June 1904-Apr 1908.

Vita Nuova (Monthly) 1925-31.

JEWISH

Jewish Advance (Weekly) 1881.

Jewish Daily Courier 1906-28.

Jewish Daily Forward 1919-32.

Jewish Labor World(Weekly)1908, 1916-19.

Jewish Standard(Weekly)Apr 1908-Jul 1909.

LITHUANIAN

Jaunimas(Semi-Monthly) 1926, 1930, 1936.

Katalikas (Weekly) 1899-1903.

Lietuva (Weekly) Dec 1892-1918.

LITHUANIAN (Cont'd)
Naujienos (Daily) Feb 1914-16.
Vilnis (Daily) 1925-27.

NORWEGIAN
Skandia(Daily) June 1899-1902, 1904-08 1910-1935.
Skandinaven (Weekly) 1871-72, 1876-87, 1889-94, 1896-1921.

POLISH
Dziennik Chicagoski (Daily) 1890-97, 1903-08, 1921-22.
Dziennik Ludowy (Daily) Mar 1907-08.
Dziennik Zjednoczenia (Daily) 1921-23, 1926-1930.
Dziennik Zwiazkowy Zgoda (Daily)1908-18.
Naród Polski (Weekly) 1897-1902, 1904-21.
Polonia (Weekly) 1916-25, 1936.
Przebudzenie (Weekly) Nov 1927-31.
Zgoda (Weekly) 1887-94, 1897-1903.

RUSSIAN
Domashni Vrach (Monthly) 1916-18.
Moskva (Monthly) 1929-30.
Rassviet (Daily) May 1926-36.
Russkaya Pochta (Weekly) 1917-18.
Russkii Viestnik (Daily) Nov 1923-Apr 1926.
Russkoe Obozrenie (Monthly) 1927-30.
Svobodnaya Rossiya 1917-23.

SERBIAN
Balkan (Weekly) 1909.
Soko (Monthly) 1912-13.
Ujednijeno Srpstvo (Weekly) 1922-23, 1934, 1936.

SLOVAK
Osadné Hlasy (Weekly) Sep-Oct 1928, Mar 1929-June 1933, Jan 1934-Mar 1935.

SLOVAK (Cont'd)
Rovnosť Ľudu (Weekly) Oct 1906-Mar 1913.

SLOVENE
Amerikanski Slovenec (Weekly) 1925-26, 1928.
Proletarec (Weekly) 1906, 1908-13, 1915-1919, 1927-1930, 1932.

SPANISH
L'Alianza (Monthly) 1936.
El Buen Samaritano (Monthly) 1924.
La Defensa (Weekly) 1935-36
Evolución (Semi-Monthly) 1937.
El Heraldo (Weekly) 1935-1927.
Ideal (Semi-Monthly) 1929-1930.
El Ideal Católico Mexicano (Weekly) 1935-1937.
El Indicador (Weekly) 1903.
El Liberal (Bi-Monthly) 1933.
La Lucha (Semi-Monthly) 1932-1934.
El Mexicano (Weekly) 1928-1930.
Mexico (Tri-Weekly) 1928-1930.
El Nacional (Weekly) 1930-1935.
La Voz de Mexico (Monthly) 1935-36.

SWEDISH
Svenska Amerikanaren (Weekly) 1907-1909.
Svenska Kuriren (Weekly) 1907-08, 1911-20, 1925-Sep 1929.
Svenska Nyheter (Weekly) 1903.
Svenska Nyheter-Humoristen (Weekly) Oct 1903-Jul 1906.
Svenska Tribunen (Weekly) 1878-Mar 1904, 1905-June 1906.
Svenska Tribunen-Nyheter (Weekly) July 1906-Dec 1906, 1909-10, 1915-16, 1919-24, 1927, 1929-33.

UKRAINIAN

Nash Styah (Weekly)Dec 1933-July 1936.
Ranna Zorya (Monthly) 1919.
Sichovi Visty (Semi-Monthly) 1920-24.
Sitch (Semi-Monthly) 1924-1929.
Ukraina (Weekly) May 1917-1920.
Ukraina (Weekly) 1930-1931.

In selecting the newspaper to be translated, availability was the chief determining factor. Since the publication dates of no one newspaper coincided with the life of a particular foreign language community, it was necessary to use several papers to obtain complete coverage. In several instances, however, two papers with widely divergent views covering the same period were examined.

The material for each foreign language group is arranged separately. Within each group the sheets are filed in reverse chronology with the most recent date first, and under the following code outline:

I. ATTITUDES
  A. Education
    1. Secular
      a. Elementary, Higher (High School and College)
      b. Foreign Languages
      c. Taxation for Public Schools
      d. Special Endowments
    2. Parochial
      a. Elementary, Higher (High School and College)
      b. Foreign Languages

c. Contributions
d. Special Endowments
3. Adult Education

B. Mores
1. Temperance
2. Blue Laws
3. Family Organization
a. Marriage
b. Parent-Child Relationship
c. Family Economic Organization
4. Religious Customs and Practices

C. Own and Other National or Language Groups.

D. Economic Organization
1. Capitalistic Enterprise
a. Big Business
b. Small Business
2. Labor Organization and Activities
a. Unions
(1) Company
(2) Craft
(3) Industrial
(4) Strikes
b. Cooperatives
c. Unemployment

E. Social Organization

F. Politics
1. Voting as Blocs
2. Part played by Social and Political Societies
3. Programs and Purposes
4. Extent of Influence
5. Political Leadership
6. Graft and Corruption

G. War

H. Social Problems and Social Legislation

J. Interpretation of American History
K. Position of Women and Feminism
L. Agriculture in the United States
M. Health and Sanitation

II. CONTRIBUTIONS AND ACTIVITIES
A. Vocational
1. Professional
2. Industrial and Commercial
3. Aesthetic
a. Arts and Handicrafts
b. Music
c. Painting and Sculpture
d. Theatrical
(1) Drama
(2) Dancing

B. Avocational and Intellectual
1. Aesthetic
a. Music
b. Painting and Sculpture
c. Theatrical
(1) Drama
(2) Dancing
(3) Festivals, Pageants, Fairs, and Expositions
d. Literary Societies
e. Literature
2. Intellectual
a. Libraries
b. Museums
c. Scientific and Historical Societies
d. Publications
(1) Newspapers
(2) Periodicals
(3) Books
e. Radio Programs and Cinema

f. Special Schools and Classes
g. Forums, Discussion Groups and Lectures
3. Athletics and Sports
C. Permanent Memorials
D. Benevolent and Protective Institutions
1. Benevolent Societies
2. Insurance Companies
3. Hospitals, Clinics and Medical Aid
4. Orphanages and Creches
5. Homes for the Aged
6. Settlement Houses and Community Centers
7. Organizations for Legal Assistance
8. Employment Agencies
9. Extra-Legal Organizations
10. Foreign and Domestic Relief
E. Crime and Delinquency
1. Organized Crime
2. Individual Crime
3. Crime Prevention
F. Real Estate Transfers and Building Activities

III. ASSIMILATION
A. Segregation
B. Nationalistic Societies and Influences
1. Effect upon United States Government and State Policies
2. Activities of Nationalistic Societies
3. Commemoration of Holidays
a. National
b. Religious
4. Conventions and Conferences
C. National Churches and Sects

D. Participation in United States Service
E. Youth Organizations
F. Special Contributions to Early American Development
G. Immigration and Emigration
H. Relations with Homeland

IV. REPRESENTATIVE INDIVIDUALS

V. MISCELLANEOUS CHARACTERISTICS
A. Foreign Origins
1. Geographical
2. Social and Occupational
B. Picturesque Miscellanies

It was not intended that this outline be a rigid classification scheme. The headings were made sufficiently general so that large varieties of material could be easily grouped together. At the same time the outline follows what is considered a logical development from the point of view of subject content. It is hoped that this arrangement will facilitate the use of the files.

Although the above outline can serve as a general guide to the type of data one may expect to find, it is desirable to cite a few specific examples of the items appearing in the files. For instance under the heading "Voting as Blocs" the following are representative. As early as September 18, 1862, the Illinois Staats-Zeitung declared:

> We have called the attention of the Germans of the state to the fact that they now have a very good opportunity

> to send a German representative to the U. S. Congress. The Germans of Illinois constitute an important part of the population of the state, and no one can justly accuse them of being immodest if they ask that one of the fourteen men chosen to represent the people of Illinois in Congress be a German.

In a similar vein the Denni Hlasatel wrote on November 5, 1922:

> All Czechoslovak voters, both men and women, should forever bear in mind that there are four of our countrymen on the Democratic ticket and not one on the Republican--and act accordingly next Tuesday.

Sounding the same note the Bollettino Italo-American National Union asserted in March 1928:

> April 10 is Election Day and various Italians are candidates for different offices. It is our duty to vote for them regardless of our party affiliations.

These items are by no means singular in their viewpoint. Expressions such as the above can be found in the material of all the language groups.

On the question of foreign language schools excerpts listed below are typical. On September 3, 1897, Lietuva wrote:

> Nobody will dispute that the most important thing to the Lithuanians in America is the Lithuanian school. It is the only institution that can uplift the intellect of our brothers and inspire our children with the Lithuanian spirit.

Similarly, the Reform Advocate on October 10, 1931, urged:

> If, therefore you want to fit your child to meet the future with courage, with wisdom, and with hopefulness, do not deprive him of his right to a Jewish education.

Illustrative of the efforts made by the various foreign communities to preserve their national identity are the following articles. On February 21, 1910, the Denni Hlasatel announced:

> A moment has arrived, when all the Slavonic nationalities in the United States have to join in a firm protest, rise in unity and without delay, in order to thwart the plan of the U. S. Census Bureau which aims at obliterating their names from the list of recognized nations and at subordinating them to the countries of their respective emigration. The census which is to be taken in April this year is not to recognize any Bohemians, Poles, Slovenians, Slovaks, or Croatians

but to recognize only Austrians, German, Hungarians, etc.

On September 6, 1929, the Osadné Hlasy wrote:

> Statistics in a recent issue of one of our English local daily newspapers showed that the Czechs and Czechoslovaks in Chicago number about 200,000. Slovaks, however, were not mentioned. Alas! That is how much we Slovaks are known to the American public. Our inactivity reflects upon us. We must, therefore, take part in the coming World's Fair by contributing our share toward its ultimate success, and prove to the world that we as Slovaks, and not as Czechoslovaks, are equal and fit for any occasion requiring undivided and unselfish support. For, after all, a Slovak is a Slovak and a Czech is a Czech.

Another illustration is the following from the Osadné Hlasy dated March 10, 1933:

> The Slovaks are willing to cooperate with the Czechs in this matter [attend the funeral rites for Anton J. Cermak]. But only on condition that they will be known under their proper name, as Slovaks, and not Czechoslovaks.

Utterances like these are not peculiar to the Slovaks or Czechs. A search through the files

of the Survey will demonstrate that they are characteristic of all foreign groups.

Further amplification of the scope of the Survey, the limits of the present writing will not permit. It is enough to state that the files contain a huge body of valuable original source materials hitherto inaccessible to most persons. This reservoir of information can be used in the preparation of historical, sociological and economic studies on all phases of city and group life. The translations open up new avenues for the study of urban organization which were formerly closed because of language barriers. Through its classification arrangement the Survey makes it possible to study a topic such as politics, education, divorce, etc., from the standpoint of all the foreign language communities at the same time and not merely of one or two isolated groups. This in itself is a considerable contribution since it insures a more complete presentation of a subject. Many scholars, research students, writers, and organizations have already used this material to great advantage. It is now made available to the public through the combined efforts of the Work Projects Administration and the Chicago Public Library.

The files of the Survey as indicated above may be consulted at the Chicago Public Library, 78 E. Washington Street. Persons or institutions interested in obtaining a positive print of the microfilm should direct their inquiries to Carl B. Roden, Librarian.

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